

OUR POWER, OUR MESSAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on the subject of my Special Order hour.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to open our first Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour of this year, during Black History Month, utilizing to the fullest extent possible: Our Power, Our Message.

I would like to thank the Congressional Black Caucus members for having the confidence to elect me to be chairwoman during the 117th Congress. I stand on the shoulders of greatness as I acknowledge the past members and chairs for their tremendous leadership.

For the next 60 minutes, we have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people about the issues of great importance to the Congressional Black Caucus and the millions of constituents we represent.

Tonight's Special Order hour topic will serve as part of a rollout of our policy agenda and celebrate our 50th anniversary in the context of the many critical issues facing the Black community.

The Congressional Black Caucus kicked off Black History Month, Madam Speaker, with the powerful Travon Free film "Two Distant Strangers," a moving story about a young Black man caught in a George Floyd type of nightmare with his local police department.

During tomorrow's CBC meeting to be held at 12 p.m., the "Living Black History" vignette, featuring all 58 members of the CBC, will be unveiled to the public via Facebook, TheGrio, and my YouTube page.

We are also hosting a virtual film screening of director Lee Daniels' film, "The United State vs. Billie Holiday," tomorrow evening.

In that spirit, later this week, I will be introducing the Black History is American History Act to close out our Black History Month.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the CBC with the largest CBC group ever, 58 members who represent the diversity, hope, and promise of this great Nation. It has been stated before, and it certainly bears repeating, the CBC is commonly referred to as the conscience of the Congress and over the decades has forcefully advocated on policies that our Nation cares about, ranging from economic justice and rep-

arations, healthcare, voting rights, consumer protection, education, and fair policing to far beyond.

The killing of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd drew America closer to another watershed moment last year, amid a pandemic that has disrupted life as we knew it, triggering an intergenerational cross-class collective of people demanding change, which led to the passage of the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, a bill that is the first-ever bold, comprehensive approach to hold police accountable, change the culture of law enforcement, empower our communities, and build trust between law enforcement and our communities by addressing systemic racism and biases to help save lives.

I also wear another hat, and that is as chairwoman of the Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee of the House Financial Services Committee. Though it may speak for itself, I appreciate that kind of transformative change which we seek in the spirit of policy, legislation, and regulation that will, hopefully, result in building a record that we can use as we promote diversity and inclusion in our democracy. As CBC founder member Bill Clay noted, we have no permanent friends or enemies, just permanent interests.

The CBC's priorities will allow us, in many instances, to work with the Biden administration to deliver relief to our constituents who have been so devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic and to work on long-term plans for recovery. To that end, we are so pleased that we will announce our domestic policy team tomorrow, as we have met with Ambassador Susan Rice, who is head of the Biden domestic policy team.

It is so important that I end by saying the Congressional Black Caucus is committed to dramatically reversing these alarming trends by working with our community leaders, allies, and colleagues in Congress to pass critical legislation and by working with the Biden-Harris administration to encourage responsible executive branch policies and actions using Our Power, Our Message.

Now, I am honored to announce our CBC anchors for tonight: Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, a scholar, a strategist, an orator, a woman who has sponsored legislation and helped craft much of the changes that we will be talking about through the 117th Congress; and I am equally as proud to say that the Special Order hour will be co-chaired by her coanchor, Congressman RITCHIE TORRES, a freshman, a member of the Financial Services Committee, a giant in public housing legislation. Tonight, you will hear from them.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

OUR POWER, OUR MESSAGE
DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, let me thank our illustrious leader of the Congressional Black Caucus, whose visionary leadership is going to carry us into the 117th Congress.

Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY acts legislatively on her history. She is from Ohio, one of the major stops of the Underground Railroad. In fact, Cincinnati, Ohio, has one of the most monumental monuments, if you will, to that freedom train, that courage, of Harriet Tubman. I might say that our chairwoman's actions are in resemblance to Harriet Tubman. We are grateful for her vision.

We will tomorrow, at the Congressional Black Caucus, unveil the talent of tens upon tens of members of the Congressional Black Caucus and lay out our legacy. Our Power, Our Message. I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership.

It is as well my honor to be able to co-chair this with, if I might with a degree of familiarity, a brother from the Bronx. I am delighted that a working man's and woman's representative has come to be able to shine, a man who is a product of public housing, public schools, and public hospitals, and who had a dream of lifting up his community and building back a better Bronx.

I am delighted that at 25, against all odds, he became the youngest elected official in New York City and the first openly LGBTQ elected official from the Bronx. He doesn't know that his reputation preceded him as a dynamic gether-done person.

I will repeat his motto before I begin my remarks, and that is RITCHIE TORRES' remarks and life motto is as follows: "My motto is life is simple. If you do nothing, nothing will change."

Wow, what a piercing message for all of us, Republicans and Democrats, to do something good.

His motto is: "If you do nothing, nothing will change. We can build a better Bronx, and we will do it together."

I am delighted to coanchor with Mr. RITCHIE TORRES for the 117th Congress.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I am particularly delighted to begin my remarks, as I continue to weave in and out tonight, and then, with my remarks, will yield to Mr. TORRES as well.